St. Patrick

Feast Day, March 17 The Patron Saint of Ireland

St. Patrick was born 387 A.D. and died March 17, 461 A.D.

Though he was never officially canonized, early Christians declared him a saint in Heaven.

Patrick led a difficult life but his faith in God never wavered. When he was a young teenager, he was kidnapped by Irish pirates and forced into slavery, which he later wrote drove him closer to God. He prayed often during his captivity, and he remained a slave until his early twenties, when he received a dream from God telling him his freedom awaited. In the dream he was led to the coast, so when he awoke, he escaped and ran to the docks where he found a ship that took him safely home to Britain.

He was reunited with his family and continued his religious studies until he was ordained a bishop. In his memoir, Patrick wrote of a vision he received in which the "Voice of the Irish" called to him and led him to spread the Gospel of God in Ireland. While preaching, he famously used the shamrock to teach about the Blessed Trinity.

Though there are many stories about what happened when Patrick preached in Ireland. Although some are likely just stories, others are likely rooted in fact. All these stories agree that Patrick was able to spread the Word of God to Ireland and built many churches. After spreading the Good News throughout Ireland for 40 years, Patrick passed away at Saul, the first Irish church he built.

ST. PATRICK'S BREAST PLATE PRAYER (433 AD)

Christ be with me, Christ within me

Christ behind me, Christ before me
Christ beside me, Christ to win me
Christ to comfort me and restore me. Christ beneath me, Chri
above me Christ in quiet, Chri
in danger
Christ in hearts of all that lov
me

stranger.

The Irish nation has remained faithful to the Church for centuries, her monasteries serving as a repository of knowledge, and her scholars among the greatest. After Patrick, the nation continues to be a source of pride and blessing for millions.

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